



Customer: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Website: www.epa.gov

Customer Size: 17,000 employees

Country or Region: United States

Industry: Government—National government agencies

Partner: Project Hosts

Partner Website: www.projecthosts.com

Partner: Innovative-e

Partner Website: www.innovative-e.com

Customer Profile

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) enforces environmental regulations passed by the U.S. Congress. The agency is based in Washington, D.C., and has approximately 17,000 employees.

Software and Services

- Microsoft Server Product Portfolio
 - Microsoft Project Server 2010
 - Microsoft SharePoint Server 2010
 - Microsoft SQL Server 2008
- Microsoft Project Professional 2010
- Technologies
 - Microsoft SQL Server 2008 Reporting Services
 - PerformancePoint Services in Microsoft SharePoint Server 2010

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EPA Doubles Project Management Maturity, Improves Scheduling by up to 50 Percent

“With Project Server 2010, individuals at all levels of the organization have deep insight into schedules and can perform to them. People perform better when they know their responsibilities and take accountability.”

Richard Warren, Project Management Team Lead, Project Management Office, Office of Water, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The U.S. EPA Office of Water wanted to do a better job of finishing software development projects on time and within budget. It quickly deployed Microsoft Project Server 2010 by hosting it with Project Hosts and engaged Innovative-e to customize it to the EPA’s needs. With the new solution, the Office of Water has doubled its project management maturity level, increased scheduling accuracy by 50 percent, and could save up to U.S.\$1.9 million in productivity gains.

Business Needs

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is the federal agency charged with protecting the environment. The EPA Office of Water is responsible for all water-related programs, including municipal water supply systems; municipal wastewater treatment facilities; and ocean, wetlands, and watershed protection.

The Office of Water had a poor record of completing software development projects. In 2008, the agency did an assessment of its project management maturity based on the Project Management Institute’s OPM 3.0 Standard,

and it scored 1.3 out of 5. The agency used ad hoc processes and procedures, and it had inconsistent ways of doing things across its many field offices.

As a result of the study, the Office of Water formed a Project Management Office and transferred management of many projects to this central office. “However, we lacked the tools to help us quickly move up the project management maturity ladder,” says Richard Warren, Project Management Team Lead, Project Management Office, Office of Water, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.



Solution

The Project Management Office staff determined that Microsoft Project Server 2010 was the right solution for the agency's needs. Warren says, "We needed something that was easy to use, and Project Server 2010 worked like the Microsoft Office programs that all our employees were familiar with. Usability is critical to adoption"

To accelerate the software's deployment, the EPA decided to host it externally with Project Hosts, a Microsoft partner with a Gold Enterprise Project Management competency and a Silver Hosting Solutions competency. "It would have taken 6 to 12 months to navigate government procurement channels and train our staff, and it would have been very difficult to give contractors access to the program through our firewalls," Warren explains. "By hosting Project Server 2010 with Project Hosts, we were able to turn on the software immediately."

The agency also needed help customizing Project Server 2010 to its needs, and so it turned to Innovative-e, a Microsoft partner with a Gold Portals and Collaboration competency and a Silver Project and Portfolio Management competency. Innovative-e configured Project Server 2010 to look and work the way EPA staffers were accustomed to. It also created a dashboard that matched the look and feel of ITDashboard.gov, a federal IT reporting portal used by government IT staffs.

The Office of Water created a two-tier solution. Project management practitioners use Project Server 2010 and the Microsoft Project Professional 2010 desktop application as a scheduling, budgeting, and collaboration platform, and Microsoft SharePoint Server 2010 provides an

executive review capability. With the dashboard, managers can focus their limited time on areas where they can make the most difference.

The EPA dashboard gives managers access to live project data so they can see the entire portfolio at a glance—which projects are on schedule and on budget, and how EPA money is being spent. The dashboard uses Microsoft SQL Server 2008 Reporting Services to retrieve data from the underlying Microsoft SQL Server 2008 data management software, and it uses PerformancePoint Services in Microsoft SharePoint Server 2010 to present data.

The Office of Water has been using Project Server 2010 as a pilot project since December 2010. The EPA is currently evaluating expanding its use across the entire agency.

Benefits

By using Project Server 2010, the EPA Office of Water has doubled its project management maturity, improved scheduling accuracy by 50 percent, and could save up to U.S.\$1.9 million annually in efficiency gains in that office alone.

Doubled Project Management Maturity

By adopting Project Server 2010, the Office of Water estimates that it has doubled its project management maturity level, moving from 1.3 to 2.8. "This is a significant achievement in the project management world," Warren says.

Improved Scheduling Accuracy by as Much as 50 Percent

Warren estimates that the Office of Water has also improved scheduling by 50 percent—a metric that covers finishing projects sooner and reducing scheduling variance. "With Project Server 2010,

individuals at all levels of the organization have deep insight into schedules and can perform to them," says Warren... "People perform better when they understand their responsibilities and take accountability,"

Expected to Save up to \$1.9 Million

Warren estimates that the Office of Water will realize \$1.9 million in productivity gains from using Project Server 2010 during the coming year. This includes a 50 percent scheduling improvement and a 61 percent productivity improvement. If the entire EPA adopts the solution, the efficiency savings on \$100 million worth of annual IT application development projects could be \$60 million.

Warren also estimates that the agency avoided \$250,000 in annual maintenance costs by hosting Project Server 2010 externally. "Plus, getting those capital funds budgeted in the current fiscal year would have been impossible," he adds.

Adopted Broadly

Because this has been a pilot project for the Office of Water, usage of Project Server 2010 has been voluntary. Still, adoption has taken off, with more than 150 project managers, executives, and stakeholders adopting the product within 12 months. Warren says, "Project managers see this tool as something that empowers them, and they want to use it."

Warren expects usage to broaden further as his team extends Project Server 2010 by linking it to the federal capital investment control system and to the development team's code repository. He envisions Project Server 2010 being used to manage environmental projects and even environmental regulation development.